

The African Conquests

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determined to yield without a blow; he mounted his horse saying, "Let who will, follow me," and rode out of the city, George was therefore able to ride into Al Mahdia without meeting any resistance; in the castle of Hasan he found that that prince had left most of his treasure behind him. Some pillage was allowed to the troops, but here again the Admiral quickly restored order, dealt out food and money to the poor, appointed a *cadi* to govern the Moslems, and imposed no more burdens on them than the usual *geziah*.

The capture of Al Mahdia, which was hailed with joy in Sicily as a final revenge for the disaster of 1123, was followed by the occupation of its dependencies Susa, Sfax, and Gabes. Susa was commanded by AH, a son of Hasan, but he made no stand, surrendered the city, and joined his father in the interior, where the two unlucky princes found themselves unable even to escape to Egypt, because of the Sicilian fleet and garrisons, Sfax was taken after some resistance (12th July)* Finally George turned upon Gabes, which yielded to him without difficulty; the Moslems remarked with wonder that he exacted no striking revenge

for the murder of Yusuf. In these towns as in Al Mahdia a Christian garrison was installed, but an ami! or cadì was appointed to represent the people,

At the end of 1148 Roger's authority on the African coast stretched from Tripoli to Tunis; his fleets held the sea from Barka to Sardinia,